

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed September 21, 2006. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's careful consideration of the Application.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that Claims 3-6, 9-11, and 18 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have rewritten Claims 3, 9, and 18 in independent form as new Claims 21, 22, and 23, respectively.

In addition, as discussed with the Examiner during a telephone interview on December 20, 2006, Applicants are also submitting new Independent Claims 24 and 27, which are method and means-plus-function versions, respectively, of subject matter identified as allowable from Claim 18.

Applicants believe all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Applicants also believe cancelled Claims 1, 2, 13, and 17 are allowable, but are canceling these claims without prejudice for the sole purpose of moving the pending claims to allowance.

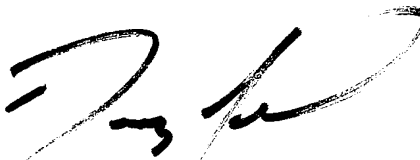
CONCLUSION

Applicants have made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance. For the foregoing reasons, and for other apparent reasons, Applicants respectfully request full allowance of all pending claims.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fee of \$400.00 for adding two additional independent claims over three to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of BAKER BOTTS L.L.P. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of BAKER BOTTS L.L.P.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance prosecution of this case in any way, the Examiner is invited to contact Douglas M. Kubehl, Attorney for Applicants, at the Examiner's convenience at (214) 953-6486.

Respectfully submitted,
BAKER BOTTS L.L.P.
Attorneys for Applicants



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Date: 12-20-06

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